



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS State Board of Retirement

ONE ASHBURTON PLACE, BOSTON, MA 02108-1607

N E W S L E T T E R



Timothy P. Cahill

Welcome to the Winter 2009 edition of the **Active Member Newsletter**

Happy New Year! The past year presented tough times for the U.S. and Massachusetts economies. The current fiscal environment makes it more important than ever to resolve to put retirement planning at the top of your to-do list.

This newsletter contains information to get you started. The updated SMART Retirement & Beyond schedule, with evening seminars in locations across the Commonwealth makes it even easier to get the information you need about your retirement benefits. Seminars are free and open to all state employees. If you prefer one-on-one counseling, walk-in appointments are always welcome at our Boston and Springfield offices. You can also contact our office to request a seminar for your agency.

Should you have any questions, suggestions or contributions for future newsletters, please do not hesitate to contact the State Board of Retirement.

On behalf of the State Board of Retirement, thank you for your service to the Commonwealth.

Timothy P. Cahill
Treasurer and Receiver General
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



STATE BOARD OF RETIREMENT

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Chairman

Treasurer Timothy P. Cahill

Elected Members

Ralph White

Theresa McGoldrick, Esq.

Appointed Member

Peter Koutoujian, Sr.

Chosen Member

Chris S. Condon

Executive Director

Nicola Favorito, Esq.

MAIN OFFICE

Address:

One Ashburton Place, Room 1219
Boston, MA 02108-1607

Office Hours:

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. M–F

Phone: (617) 367-7770

Fax: (617) 723-1438

REGIONAL OFFICE

Address:

436 Dwight Street, Room 109A
Springfield, MA 01103

Office Hours:

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. M–F

Phone: (413) 730-6135

Fax: (413) 730-6139

PHONE TOLL-FREE

1-800-392-6014 (Mass. only)

Automated Phone Options

Retirement Counselor 1
Disability 2
Survivor Benefits 5
Buyback 6
Withdrawal/Refund 7
Direct Deposit 8

EMAIL

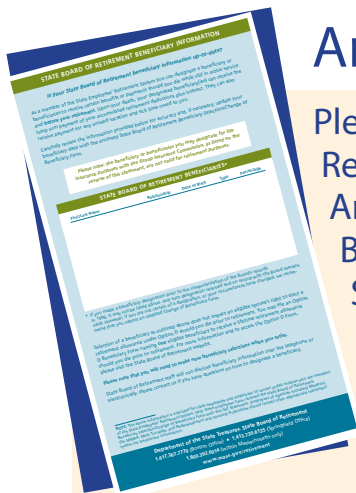
SRB@tre.state.ma.us

WEB SITE

www.mass.gov/retirement

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Are Your Beneficiaries Up-to-Date?

Please
Review Your
Annual
Benefit
Statement
to Make
Sure!

Your Annual Benefit Statement from the Group Insurance Commission includes information on the beneficiaries you have on file with the State Board of Retirement.

Benefit Statements are being mailed this month. The front of the form includes information on your

insurance benefits. If you have health, dental, vision, life, or long term disability insurance through the GIC, make sure to review your coverage on this statement. **Any errors with your insurance need to be corrected directly through the GIC.** You can go to their website for contact information at mass.gov/gic or call them at 617-727-2310.

The back of the form has your State Board of Retirement beneficiary information. If the information listed is not correct or needs to be updated, please fill out and mail the form enclosed with your benefit statement back to us in the envelope provided.

When filling out the beneficiary selection form, please make sure all information is filled out correctly, including the beneficiary's date of birth and social security number.

The Board uses this information when issuing certain benefits should a member pass away prior to retirement.

Please note that we cannot give out beneficiary information or make corrections over the phone. However, if you have any questions, please call our administration department at 617-367-7770 ext. 858 or 800-392-6014 ext. 858. in Massachusetts. ■

Reminders

Please notify your Human Resources coordinator of any change of address.

Important Dates to Remember:

January

Monday, January 19 | Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, offices closed
Thursday, January 29 | Board Meeting

February

Monday, February 16 | Presidents' Day, offices closed
Thursday, February 26 | Board Meeting

March

Tuesday, March 17 | Evacuation Day, offices open
Thursday, March 26 | Board Meeting



Look for this icon on our website to calculate an estimate of your pension benefits

Retirement Seminars



SMART & Beyond
RETIREMENT

New dates have been added! Log on to our website or call 617-367-6900 and ask for Leanne Martin to register. All remaining events are on Thursdays from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Boston, January 29th, State House

Danvers, February 5th, North Shore CC

Braintree, February 26, Lottery HQ

Dartmouth, March 12, UMASS/Dartmouth

Bourne, March 19, Mass Maritime Academy

Representatives from the State Retirement Board, the Deferred Compensation SMART Plan, the Group Insurance Commission and Social Security will go over the benefits available to you as a state employee.

PRIM Board Update: November 2008

The Pension Reserves Investment Trust (PRIT) Fund is a pooled investment fund established to invest the assets of the Massachusetts State Teachers' and Employees' Retirement Systems, and the assets of county, authority, district, and municipal retirement systems that choose to invest in the Fund. The PRIT Fund was created by the Legislature in December 1983. The nine-member PRIM Board is responsible for the management of the PRIT Fund. The Treasurer and Receiver General of the Commonwealth is a member ex officio and serves as the chair. The State Employees' Retirement System also has two representatives on the Board: the members of that Retirement System elect one and one is an Elected Member of the State Employees' Retirement Board.

***Pension Reserves Investment Trust (PRIT) FUND ASSETS:**
\$37,526,097,000

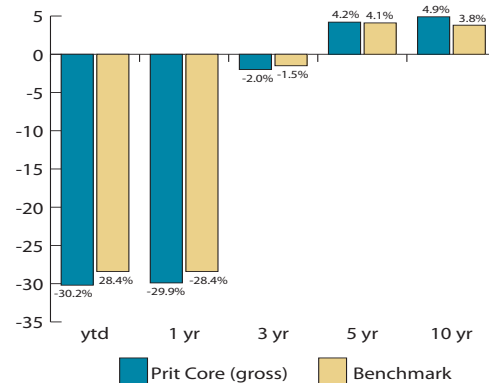
***State Employees' Retirement System (SERS) ASSETS:**
\$15,303,587,386

To get more detailed information on the Pension Reserves Investment Management (PRIM) Board you can always go to the PRIM website to view their complete quarterly updates at www.mapension.com.

Due to limited space, we can only provide a condensed version of their fund updates. For more information about the PRIM Board, please visit their website at www.mapension.com

*As of 11/30/2008

PRIT Core Fund as of 11/30/08



Market Recap – November 30, 2008

Domestic Equity Markets:

Index	Month	CYTD
S&P 500 (ex-tob.)	-7.17%	-37.88%
DOW	-4.85%	-31.74%
NASDAQ % Chg	-10.77%	-42.10%
Russell 2000	-11.83%	-37.42%
Russell 3000	-7.89%	-38.50%



Your Vote Counts - Board Updates



Board Members: (l-r) Theresa McGoldrick, Ralph White, Treasurer Tim Cahill, Chairman, Peter Koutoujian, Sr., and Chris Condon

Board member, Chris Condon was sworn in to the State Board of Retirement on December 23, 2008. Chris is currently the legislative director for the SEIU Local 509. He has been on the Board since 2003.

The chosen member is chosen by the other four members of the Board and cannot be an employee, retiree, or official of the Commonwealth. He will serve a three-year term without compensation.

Nominations Being Accepted for Upcoming Board Election

The State Board of Retirement will be conducting a regular election for one of its elected positions. The elected member will serve for a three-year term without compensation.

Interested candidates need to submit nomination papers, available at our offices or on our website, with 75 signatures of active or retired members of the State Employees' Retirement System in order to be included on the ballot.

Nomination papers are due in our offices no later than Friday, January 30th by 5:00 p.m. Please refer to our website for more information on the election and qualifying candidates. ■

Understanding Your Benefits: *DOMESTIC RELATIONS ORDERS*



Retirement benefits and rights related to them can be marital assets that are divided when people divorce.

If parties to a divorce agree to divide retirement benefits they must draft a Domestic Relations Order ("DRO"). A DRO is a court order that directs a retirement plan administrator such as the Massachusetts State Board of Retirement ("Board") how to divide a member's retirement benefits.

It is the parties' responsibility to draft a DRO consistent with their divorce judgment. However, for members of a public employee retirement system in Massachusetts,

a DRO must also comply with the requirements of M.G.L. c.32, the law governing public retirement.

The Board encourages parties to a DRO to submit a draft to the Board before filing it with the Court for approval. Board staff will review its form only to determine if it complies with the requirements of M.G.L. c.32 as presently written.

A DRO should address items including, 1) whether the monthly retirement allowance will be divided, and how that will be calculated; 2) what will happen if a disability retirement is awarded; 3) if a particular retirement Option must be chosen; and 4) what will happen if a member withdraws his funds or passes away prior to retiring.

The requirements of M.G.L. c.32 may change because of changes

in federal or state law. If you have previously filed a DRO with the Board please contact us well before retiring so Board staff can review it before your retirement date.

The information above is not intended as a substitute for the Massachusetts General Laws. The contents are provided for informational purposes only, and are not intended as legal advice. For questions concerning your specific situation, you should seek advice from an attorney or a financial planner.

If you or your attorney has questions, please call (617) 367-7770 or 1-800-392-6014 (Mass only), and Board staff will direct your call. ■

Layoffs & Your Retirement Benefits

If you have received a letter from your agency pertaining to a voluntary layoff request or you have been involuntarily separated from state service and have questions regarding how this may impact your retirement options, contact our counseling divisions in Boston at 617-367-7770 ext. 1 or in Springfield at 413-730-6135.

You may be eligible for a Termination Retirement Allowance if the following are true:

- ✓ You have 20 years or more of full time creditable service, and
- ✓ You were **involuntarily separated** from your position
- ✓ Employee would receive 1/3 of three-year salary average plus annuity

or

- ✓ You have 30 years or more of full time creditable service regardless of age or nature of separation
- ✓ Retirement allowance is calculated two ways, section 10 or superannuation retirement. Employee is given highest calculation.

A Termination Retirement Allowance requires certification by your employer and approval by both the Board and the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission (PERAC). ■